

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 006838

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/RUS, OES/STC, EB/TPP/ATP, EB/TPP/BTA  
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO USAID FOR TROSTLE  
HHS FOR WSTEIGER/PBUDASHEWITZ  
FAS FOR ITP/MACKE/THOMAS, CMP/DLP/WETZEL  
FAS PASS FSIS AND APHIS  
VIENNA PASS APHIS  
BRUSSELS PASS APHIS/FERNANDEZ  
GENEVA PASS HEALTH ATTACHE

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [KPAO](#) [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [TU](#) [CASC](#)

SUBJECT: Visit to Turkey by USAID Avian Influenza Official

1. Summary. In the month since the outbreak of Avian Influenza in Turkey, international and bilateral partners have been examining Turkey's response as a possible model for other countries and exploring possible deficient areas in which to collaborate with Turkey in case of any future outbreaks. Although Turkey's response to the outbreak was well regarded, the government's ability to respond to multiple outbreaks, the need to educate both farmers and consumers on the virus and lack of supra-governmental coordination need to be addressed, hopefully before any new outbreaks occur. Embassy recommends that USAID work through Embassy to focus support to Turkey on surveillance/containment training and communication.  
End Summary.

-----  
Visit By USDAID Official  
-----

2. On November 15 and 16, the Deputy Director of USAID's Avian and Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Response Unit, Dr. Murray Trostle, and EmOffs discussed the current situation and opportunities to collaborate with Turkish officials in the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, Turkish private poultry sector representatives as well as International Organizations like the World Bank and FAO and the EU Mission to Turkey. Since the outbreak, Turkey has been the focus of many other delegations seeking information and supporting coordination efforts. The EU, World Bank and FAO have sent delegations to Turkey recently, Thailand sent AI speakers during the past two weeks and Canada plans to send 3 veterinarians to Turkey in the coming week.

-----  
A Short Recap of the Outbreak  
-----

3. Avian Influenza was first detected on a private turkey farm in the northwestern region of Balikesir, Turkey on October 1 with H5N1 confirmed on October 7. By all accounts the government's response to the outbreak was effective and swift. The affected area was quarantined, all birds in the area were culled and the information provided to the public was clear and definitive. In addition, compensation to farmers was expedited, which will hopefully encourage reporting of any future outbreaks. There have been no human cases of infection and the virus remains a bird disease at this time.

-----  
Still Some Concerns  
-----

4. Despite the excellent response by the Turkish government to the outbreak, a number of concerns still exist and were corroborated by others during many of Dr. Trostle's meetings. Of the concerns noted:  
--The need for greater surveillance of migratory birds.  
--The need for greater coordination among various Ministries in the Turkish government and the establishment of a supra-ministerial with authority to direct all agencies to act in the case of other outbreaks or a human pandemic.  
--The need for a more thorough surveillance and reporting system, particularly from small farms.  
--The availability of an adequate compensation fund (either monetary or in-kind), which would encourage small farm-holders to report any outbreaks.  
--The need for some sort of public education system, providing clear and accurate information to producers as well as consumers on the virus.  
--The need for training veterinarians for rapid containment, particularly in managing multiple outbreaks.

5. Other organizations noted that the Turkish government has also requested specific equipment to combat AI. In particular, for agriculture, the government has requested incinerators to dispose of large numbers of animals, animal

vaccines, protective equipment for workers, and upgrading of diagnostic equipment. On the health side, the government is requesting protective equipment for health workers and supplies of antivirals including Tamiflu. Most of the equipment and medicines will be provided under existing programs operated by the World Bank and European Union. Obviously, should the situation shift from containing a strictly animal disease to a pandemic affecting humans, these needs will change.

-----  
Possible Avenues of Collaboration  
-----

16. Given the level of activity already focused on Turkey some sort of information sharing among the GOT, IO's and Embassies will be needed in order to avoid any redundancy in programs. The World Bank may be best suited for this role given their presence in Turkey. For the United States, Dr. Trostle and Embassy State and FAS representatives believe that some form of technical assistance would be most useful to complement some of the work of other countries and organizations. In particular, Post has the following suggestions with the caveat that these may change should the situation warrant.

-----  
A Real Need for Training...  
-----

17. First, Turkey would benefit from some type of technical training for local veterinarians and farmers. Most officials indicated that knowledge levels at central government offices, particularly in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir were sufficient, but that in more rural areas there has been little dissemination of information. As a result, some recurring training in several areas of the country could be beneficial in stemming any animal outbreaks. Post could draw effectively on farmers unions, poultry associations and Ministry contacts to disseminate information and organize this effort. Currently, many countries are sending random speakers to the country. Post therefore emphasizes the need for recurring efforts. This would hopefully encourage the development of a mechanism to address any future outbreaks of AI or other diseases. Post also believes strongly that in-country training would be much more effective in reaching a larger portion of the population.

-----  
..And Public Education  
-----

18. Second, we believe that the creation of a public education program is essential. Although, only 9000 birds had to be culled as a result of the one outbreak, poultry consumption decreased by 90 percent following the outbreak and is currently only 50 percent of normal. In addition, small and subsistence farmers need to be educated on the need for reporting and the proper steps that should be taken in case of any bird deaths. One possibility in addressing this issue would be to draw on information used worldwide on the outbreak, which could be tailored to the Turkish needs. The information could be disseminated through various local organizations.

-----  
Comment: Turkey as a Model  
-----

19. Turkey could serve as a model for many countries, particularly in the region, in responding to this crisis. Any collaborative efforts could benefit ongoing efforts in other countries, particularly those at the same level of development. Although the reaction by government officials was good, it is the combined efforts by Turkey's private and public sector, which stand out. Fostering this cooperation and sustaining future efforts could encourage other countries in this effort.

10. Embassy PA arranged for Mr. Trostle to conduct an interview with the Anatolian News Agency to note U.S.-Turkey collaboration on this issue, as part of overall bilateral relationship.

MCELDOWNEY